THE NEWS LETTER

OF THE COLLEGE ENGLISH ASSOCIATION

Vol IX - No. 9 | BROOKLYN COLLEGE — BROOKLYN 10, NEW YORK | December, 1947

Duke University Library
MAY 20 1948
Durham, N. C.

Preparing College Teachers

It is in the preparation of college teachers that the graduate - school program is seriously inadequate. Its single-minded emphasis on the re-research tradition and its purpose of forcing all its students into the mold of a narrow specialism do not produce college teachers of the the kind we urgently need.

Perhaps the place to begin the process of reform is with the graduate faculties themselves. In few cases can the same man function satisfactorily on the level of intense specialization and preoccupation with research and also on the level of broad synthesis and general education. Not many men can serve two such different masters. A special effort should be made, therefore, to add to graduate teaching staffs men of broad knowledge, men of imagination and understanding and wisdom. They can then educate others, who will educate others and others on through the whole educational system.

From "Excerpts from the first report of President Truman's Commission on Higher Education for American Democracy," the New York Times, Dec. 16, 1947.

Is not the insistence on an "Original Contribution" for a Ph. D. thesis in English producing sharply diminishing returns ?

Vo., W. Va., N. Carolina Section

The following officers of the section were elected at the Lynchburg meeting:

President: Harry K. Russell, Univ. of North Carolina.

Vice President: Mabel Davidson, Randolph-Macon Women's College.

Secy-Treasurer: Martha Dabney Jones, St. Mary's Jr. College.

Middle Atlantic Section

Karl Shapiro, one of our most significant contemporary poets, will be the luncheon speaker at the spring meeting of the Middle Atlantic Group which is to be held at Goucher College, Baltimore, on April 17th.

A program to proceed the gustatory activities is being arranged by Raymond D. Havens, Elizabeth Nitchie and Thomas F. Marshall, in consultation with other members of the group. Particulars will be announced as soon as these have been completed.

President Havens requests that each member make it a point to bring at least one colleague who is not now a member of the College English Association.

As Others See Us

The September issue of the NEWS LETTER produced a gratifying number of fan letters, including, three requests for bundles of copies to be circulated to English staffs. With each bundle, the editor sent a request: would the head of the department please ask the opinion of his colleagues on that issue of our paper, and particularly on the two articles 'As Others See Us" and "Outside Comments on the Ph.D?" There follows a selection from the comments collected by Professor Paul D. Eagwell, Head, Department of Written and Spoken English, Michigan State College. This symposium follows the precedent of anonymity set in the September issue, although the editor will be glad to put interested readers in touch with the authors of any of the comments quoted.

• • • •

I am in accord with **The News Letter's** positive approach towards problems in English education. If college English departments are to contribute vitally to progress in higher education, college English teachers must get out of the stacks; remove the far off Beowulf-look; humanize their teaching approach; and become aware of the place of English (all phases) in everyday life.

• • • •

Although I see no significance in the fact that only "2.9% of our English doctors were found in non-academic employment in September, 1940" (I dare say the perecentage of our medical doctors in non medical employment is even lower) I subscribe wholeheartedly to the idea that the English Ph. D. program needs a re-examination, if only to keep that 2.9% who strayed away, within the fold.

• • • •

"Outside Comments on the Ph. D." The writer bemoans the fact that Ph. D.'s in English do not find opportunities in fields outside of teaching. My reaction is: Why should they? A Ph. D in English has a narrow field of literature (called by them a broad and liberal education) that leaves out much of science and the world of present day action, research, and vital communication. Why should such a program be considered of value in entering other fields. We are finding that the Ph. D. in English isn't much good for teaching, and it isn't much good for anything else. Maybe it isn't much good. "Period."

"As Others See Us." This seems to be a valuable contribution. I have passed this along to graduate students who plan to enter research fields. I have also utilized the information concerning the delay in school and the time when actual report writing takes place to try to make the present unreal writing situation more important to the student.

• • • •

My reading of the College English **News Letter** for September, 1947, constituted my introduction to this publication. I found its manner engaging and its matter generally provocative. I am mailing my subscription in anticipation of additional pleasure and profit from future issues.

• • • •

Thanks a lot for the copy of the **News Letter.** I enjoyed it a lot.

In the criticism of the teaching of English reported in the **News Letter,** the emphasis seems to be on the lack of utility of the product we turn out, even the utility of the graduate school trained composition teacher. I can imagine the ultra-dignified countercharges which these criticisms will undoubtedly bring from many English teachers. 'Culture," "the finer things of life," "the abundant life," - typical Freshman abstractions - will undoubtedly be so overworked that they will need a good stiff dose of digitalis to revive them after the tumult is over. I can't help wondering if all these beautiful abstractions don't add up to a triple-reinforced defense mechanism on the part of English Departments from graduate committees down. The "agaraphobia" of English Ph. D.s suggests that English teachers have a very empty void where their sense of achievement and feelings of personal security should be located.

We are living in a world where millions are freezing and starving, where in our own "land of plenty" the four basic necessities of life - food, fuel, clothing, and shelter - are extremely hard to obtain because of scarcity, where peace seems to be getting farther and farther away in the stratosphere of abstractions. Can it be that living in such a world is forcing English teachers to forsake their hitherto swami-like contemplation of the ice cream and cake of "Culture" and "the finer things of life" for a new

(continued on page 2)

Walden And How To Teach It

(A report of a panel discussion held at a meeting of the New England Section of CEA, at Northeastern University, Boston, October 18, 1947. The report has been assembled from notes provided by the speakers.)

Morse S. Allen (Trinity College, Hartford, Conn.)

Walden is a rich book, and rich on many levels of expression. The only satisfactory edition for a teacher would have to have twelve-inch margins. No one can fail to get something from it, but too many students seem to carry away only the vague impression that its purpose is to tell us "How to Live Alone and Like It," despite the fact that Thoreau was far from being either a hermit or a teacher of hermitry. What I have to say here deals merely with some possible preliminary approaches to detailed study aimed at a more adequate understanding.

One method of approaching the study of **Walden** is rhetorical, or stylistic. After all, as Professor Gay says, we read **Walden** not because of its philosophy or its economics, but because it is literature. Much of the book is true prose-poetry, the impassioned expression on the face of a philosophy. Such a sentence as "Olympus is but the outside of the earth anywhere" can stir like a trumpet-call. One may, then, begin the study of **Walden** simply by beginning to read it, as intelligently and expressively as possible, without more ado.

My colleague, Professor Kenneth Cameron, who really knows this subject, has found the genetic approach the best. He tells me that a full month's preparatory work in the sources of Thoreau's thought is necessary, since Thoreau himself expresses it only aphoristically, or by hints and allusions. Platonism, Plotinus and Neo-Platonism; Coleridge's metaphysical theory, which Emerson took over almost entirely; Emerson's **Nature** which was Thoreau's bible and whence he derived whatever structure **Walden** has: when the basic principles of Transcendentalism are understood, **Walden** itself is splendidly illuminated, and intelligent reading becomes possible.

A third kind of introduction depends less on stylistic admiration or philosophic comprehension than it does on annoyance. Too many students approach **Walden** as they do any book bearing the hallowed label

(continued on page 3)

THE NEWS LEITER
Editor
ROBERT T. FITZHUGH
Editor Emeritus
BURGES JOHNSON
Associate Editor
J. GORDON EAKER, Jersey City Junior College, Jersey City, N. J.
Published Nine Times a Year
at Brooklyn, New York
for the
COLLEGE ENGLISH ASSOCIATION
President
ODELL SHEPARD
Vice-President
GEORGE F. REYNOLDS
University of Colorado
Vice-President
HELEN C. WHITE, Wisconsin
Executive Secretary
ROBERT T. FITZHUGH
Brooklyn College, Brooklyn 10, N.Y.
Treasurer
JESS H. JACKSON
William & Mary, Williamsburg, Va.

DIRECTORS
(Term ends in Dec. of year named)
A. P. Hudson, Univ. of N. Carolina (1947)
Herbert Creek, Purdue Univ. (1948)
Ross Taylor, Univ. of Wichita (1948)
Howard Lowry, College of Wooster (1948)
E. K. Brown, Univ. of Chicago 1949)
Henry S. Canby, Yale University (1949)
S. M. Pitcher, State Univ. of Iowa (1949)
T. M. Pearce, Univ. of New Mexico (1950)
Theodore Spencer, Columbia Univ. (1950)
Mark Van Doren, Columbia Univ. (1950)
Membership in the College English Association, including THE NEWS LETTER, $2.00 a year. Subscription for Libraries, $1.50.

A Public Duty

With a predicted college enrollment in the mid-1950's of four and a half million, if the present curricular pattern continues there will then be at least two million college students taking "freshmen" and "sophomore" English, in 80,000 sections, from 20,000 teachers. These students will be no better "prepared" than those now in college, nor any more sympathetic to literature, and they will be more and more enrolled in publicly supported universities, teachers colleges, junior colleges, community colleges.

Under these circumstances, the significance of what strong colleges with selected enrollments can do will be relatively unimportant in the national pattern of higher education. And English studies, if they are to remain a significant part of the national curriculum, must be made profitable for the mass market. Otherwise, they will become increasingly an elegant discipline for a few. But it is only as a vital part of the whole, publicly supported system of higher education that English studies can remain influential in the national life.

Whatever else college English teachers may do, they must devise general courses which are adaptable to all sorts of students in all sorts of colleges. In simple terms, they have a public duty, and it will not suffice for them to cry "What, lower our standards!", or to dogmatize, or to lament the inadequacies of their students. They need not lapse into "Communications" or popular magazines, or nestle in the lap of nationalism. But if they recognize their public duty and meet it, they will begin to have the new experience of drawing strength and abiding satisfaction from an identity with the national culture, and that not with a capital "C."

Brooklyn College - What's That?

Since the Executive Offices of C.E.A. were moved to Brooklyn College, the editor has been asked a question so often that he has come to feel the answer may be news for members. The question takes several forms.

Blunt: "Brooklyn College - What's That?"

Chesterfieldian: (With emphasis on various words depending on the questioner's mood) "Just what is Brooklyn College, anyway?"

Caspar Milquetoastish: "Brooklyn College; that's one of the New York colleges, isn't it?"

Here is the answer, supplied on request by one of the editor's colleagues, who doubles in brass as the department of public relations:

Brooklyn College is one of four colleges maintained by the City of New York, under the direction of its Board of Higher Education. The BC 40-acre campus is situated in the residential section of Brooklyn known to the world as Flatbush. The section is one of the original Dutch towns which were joined to Broeklyn of old.

The College stemmed from branches in Brooklyn of The City and Hunter Colleges, located in the downtown section of the borough. On October 2, 1935 ground was broken for the group of five buildings which now house 14,500 undergraduates in day and evening sessions, as well as 675 students in the Division of Graduate Studies. Pres. Roosevelt laid the cornerstone of the physical education building - since named in his honor - on Oct. 28, 1936. Classes were first held on Oct. 18, 1937. Plans have been completed for a sixth building designed to house two auditoria, as well as the Departments of Design and Music.

In the liberal arts tradition the College grants A.B., B.S. in Science, A.M., and M.S. in Science degrees In the Evening Session the Associate in Arts diploma is granted at the end of two years — the quivalent of a Junior College education. Pre-professional diplomas are also granted in the Evening Session.

The day session faculty runs to 550. Harry D. Gideonse, formerly professor of economics at Rutgers, Barnard and Chicago, has been president since 1939.

As Others See Us

(continued from page 1)

interest in the bread and butter value of sound thinking? Can it be that English teachers are beginning to see that the Freshman first feels the need for skill in sound thinking when he has to prepare either a spoken or written composition?

Everyone knows and has known for some time that the Ph. D degree, a research degree, is not a perfect preparation, and there are some who would say no preparation at all, for the teaching of English which is not a reasarch field. But what the author suggests as a substitute, as I see it, simply could not be made to work. That is, it could not be made to work in our educational system as we have it today. We will say that a prospective teacher decides to take some courses in the best literature of the world, graduate and under-graduate courses, and then does some writing or editing on his own. The question now arises, what English Department would or could hire him? English Departments are forced to follow the pattern set by the colleges as a whole. Other departments in all colleges hire only teachers who are specialists in a particular field or a limited part of that field. Are English Departments going to be different from the other departments of the college and hire teachers with a general knowledge of their field? And if they did decide to become a law unto themselves would the college as a whole sanction it? Most colleges have graduate schools and graduate committees whose business it is to look after the scholastic standards of their school; I believe these groups would have some objection to this procedure.

Colleges, perhaps, could and should give a course in writing technical reports, but that would call for a course in a dozen or more specific types of writing. This might in the end become complicated. No college can hope to turn out expert writers in any field, and much less can it expect to turn out finished writers in all fields. This must necessarily come from experience, perhaps the exeperience of a lifetime. As a matter of fact, most of the suggestions of these writers given for the improvement of the students' writing, which were clarity, organization, use of the specific word, are fundamental to any type of good writing, and are just the principles that most teachers try to apply and develop in their composition classes. The difficulty comes with the fact that we should recognize by this time that students are not able to learn and put into practice all that has been taught them. Principles can be taught, but a student learns to apply them only by constant practice. This is particularly true in such a complicated art as written composition which the student may have studied more or less three of four years before. And, of course, forgotten.

* * * *

A further comment on the desirability of teaching report writing is culled from the editor's mail:

"I really think the specific requirements (for writing special reports) could be taught best on the job. Here is a good example of a need for in-service training of a type that could not readily be supplanted by previous training, for the very reasons expressed by the second writer. Even if classes were taught to write technical reports, there is no guarantee that the needs of each would be met in the particular positions in which the students would later find themselves. I believe organization, logical thinking, vocabulary study, precise writing, and style are already covered in good college freshman English classes. The nomenclature of the special fields would almost have to be learned on the job and transcribed into layman's vernacular. I think the concern which is eager to establish fine public relations and to educate the general public concerning its special offerings should be willing to provide such in-service training. The part that a university could play in helping such concerns might be to provide assistance in such training at the time it is needed rather than to try, perhaps futilely, to anticipate the needs.

Myrtle Pihlman Pope
35B George Legare Homes
Naval Base, South Carolina

Ready January 15
Two Important New Texts for Vocabulary Study
USING WORDS EFFECTIVELY
Series A and Series B
By C. C. Parkhurst & Alice Blais
Boston University
A fresh, vigorous, and systematic approach to vocabulary study, in two parallel volumes which are adapted to any period desired, from three weeks to a full year.
168 pages per volume
$1.50 each
HARPER & BROTHERS
49 East 33d St., New York 16

Walden And How To Teach It

(continued from page 1)

of "classic"; at sight of the holy ground, they not only put off their shoes from their feet, but also are perfectly willing to obey the rest of the command; "Draw not nigh hither." They expect to accept a classic respectfully, conventionally, and—passively. (Of course every class has one or two conscientious objectors, but the rest of the class regards their antics as diversion only.)

To break through this shell, one can make use of two facts. One is that Thoreau, like Blake, would not cease from mental fight, nor did his sword sleep in his hand. He welcomed disagreement, to the point of provoking it. So it is easy to get students provoked at him.

It is especially easy because of the second fact,—that Thoreau was most shrill when weakest; that is, when telling other foxes the superiority of taillessness. For both personal and idealistic reasons, he had come to despise the world of humanity, and hate the flesh—volubly. Students unthinkingly accept his love of solitude and nature so long as it is expressed positively, but they can get quite irritated, even shocked, by the negative side of his praise of solitude; that is, by his disdain for humanity and his disgust at the body. In **Walden** there may be found a sort of crescendo of misanthropy, beginning with such mild aversion as "If we would enjoy the most intimate society . . .we must not only be silent, but commonly so far apart that we cannot possibly hear each other's voice;" increasing through the Swiftian "Many of our houses . . . are so magnificent that their inhabitants seem to be the only vermin which infest them;" rising almost to hysteria in "The wonder is how they, how you and I, can live this slimy beastly life, eating and drinking;" and culminating in a true heresy of the Spiritual Absolute: "Our very life is a disgrace." Really to believe this is to commit as unpardonable sin as did Ethan Brand.

An angry student is not a passive one. Thoreau said, "I have never yet met a man who was quite awake," but the more aroused the reader, the more value he is capable of receiving. For this approach is of course only an approach. Thereafter it is not hard to divert the student's mind from Thoreau's weakness to his strengths. And there is wonderful richness in **Walden**. I know of no other prose writer who comes so near to conveying the inexpressible with such perfection of form, as in "The true harvest of my daily life is somewhat as intangible and indescribable as the tints of morning and evening. It is a little star-dust caught, a segment of the rainbow which I have clutched."

Osborne Earle (Wheaton College, Norton, Mass.)

The charge most constant and most difficult to answer satisfactorily is that Thoreau was advocating as well as practising a perhaps harmless but certainly stupid and unrealistic rejection of the material and mechanical advantages of civilization. Students readily assume that he would stop all growth and improvement in this direction, and that his book is therefore simply a diverting account of a vacation exercise, without larger significance.

I approve entirely of their dislike of quaintness and archaism and reaction in any expression of life and think they are quite right in seeing obvious elements of them in Thoreau's activity and attitude. Though it is important to be aware of the dangers of industrial development, it is not an intelligent recognition of the movement of life itself to imply, as Thoreau often does, that technology is more evil than good. Beside Whitman's magnificent assumption and assertion of the 19th Century, Thoreau's bitter jibes at the railroad and the telegraph seem like an evasion of life. One must admit a deficiency in Thoreau's perception, in his evident inability to see that spiritual progress is to be made through and with material prograss, rather than by a carping antagonism.

But the teacher must try to show that for the **most part Walden** is precisely the opposite of a reactionary book. How can this be done?

1) An understanding of Thoreau's passion for nature may be urged as a way of extenuating his resentment of the railroad in Walden woods. This, combined with his just description of human economic and spiritual ills attributable to industrial growth, seems to make partially forgivable his genuine dislike of the **new things** his time was producing.

2) It can also be shown that that dislike is but one of two conflicting responses, both coming from deep in his nature. If at times he cried out against the railroad as an intruder on his domain and a destroyer of human life, he could also feel its poetic beauty of sound and form, sense its value as a symbol in the new mythology of a triumphant race, feel approvingly the electric atmosphere of Concord depot, and admire the enterprise and honesty of commerce. He was not wholly lacking in instinctive wholesome affirmation of the **material** energy of his own era.

On the more conscious level, he thinks that civilization is a real advance in the condition of man; he admits that the railroad is at least "comparatively" good; and he asks, "If we live in the 19th Century why should we not enjoy the advantages which the 19th Century offers?" Here is a fundamental **modernism**, with respect to technological achievement. Thoreau today might build his house of cement blocks and go to the village in his car, without inconsistency.

3) It should be possible, then, to show that in spite of his taunts at "inventions," Thoreau does not necessarily, or even at all, mean that they should be abandoned or discouraged—though he **felt** otherwise at times—but rather, when one considers his larger principles, used intelligently for the support and development of an ideally whole and perfect life.

The residence at Walden was an **experimentally** reactionary gesture for the purpose of making clear to himself and to his contemporaries the fundamental realities of the good life, so easily lost sight of in a confining and fast-moving age, and **always** the concern of the true liberal and radical. It was nostalgic only in part and in outward manifestation — which actually served to give objectivity and vividness. Its experimental, tentative character relates it to the scientific method.

(Continued on Page 4)

A MANUAL and WORKBOOK

CONCERNING WORDS

Revised edition

By **J. E. Norwood**

This unique text is designed to increase the student's vocabulary and diction by familiarizing him with the roots, suffixes, and prefixes of words.

Geoffrey Chaucer

THE CANTERBURY TALES

Edited by **Edwin Johnston** and **Gordon Donley Wilson**

This modern, unexpurgated volume stresses literary, not linguistic aspects, and includes head-links and end-links in addition to the tales usually studied.

Send for your examination copies

PRENTICE-HALL INC.

70 Fifth Avenue
New York 11

A marvelously good job - the notes are lean but apposite, and the meat in them is extremely good; the Introduction is cautious, nevertheless it boldly hints at the great outlines of Melville's "gospel" with its Job's chapter of doubt; and the illustrations are magnificent.'—Oscar Cargill, New York University, says of

Melville's

MOBY-DICK

Edited by Willard Thorp

Princeton University

576 pages **$2.25**

Oxford University Press

14 Fifth Avenue • New York 11

BOOK NOTE

The Practice of Exposition

The purpose of this new practical and down-to-earth text, by Joseph M. Bachelor and Harold L. Haley, is to teach college freshmen how to do the kind of writing that will be expected of them all their lives. The forty-nine selections are timely and thought provoking, and the questions, suggestions and exercises are to the point. **$2.20**

Appleton-Century-Crofts, In

35 West 32nd St., N. Y. 1, N. Y.

A WORKABLE college composition text for first year students, and a modern reference on good English usage

A MANUAL FOR COLLEGE ENGLISH

By GEORGE SUMMEY, Jr. and JOHN PAUL ABBOTT

The Agricultural and Mechanical College of Texas

Makes the teaching of the course easier and more effective under today's conditions. Exercises help student help himself.

432 pp., $2.50

The Ronald Press Company

15 East 26th Street, New York 10

Rinehart Editions

INEXPENSIVELY PRICED — 50c — 65c — 75c — depending on the length of the particular book — RINEHART EDITIONS will eventually provide a wide selection of standard classics from the English, American and Continental literatures in reprints of outstanding quality.

•

NOW AVAILABLE — *THE SCARLET LETTER* by Nathaniel Hawthorne — with an Introduction by Austin Warren, Professor of English, University of Iowa. 272 pages, 50c.
Rinehart & Company, Inc.
232 Madison Ave., New York, 16

WORKBOOK FOR ENGLISH VOCABULARY BUILDING
by RICHARD D. MALLERY
New York University
D. C. HEATH AND CO.

The Evolution of a Masterpiece

WALT WHITMAN'S BACKWARD GLANCES
Edited by **Sculley Bradley** and **John A. Stevenson**

Here is a book that offers rare insight into the creative process. It includes a facsimile of the manuscript "A Backward Glance O'er Travel'd Roads" which appeared in **The Critic** in 1884, and the text of three contributory essays, written in the "early candlelight of old age" on Whitman's purpose in writing **Leaves of Grass.** The essays, two of which are hitherto uncollected, cast new light on the works of the Good Gray Poet.
80 pages illustrated $5.00

UNIVERSITY OF PENNSLYVANIA PRESS
Philadelphia 4, Pennsylvania

Walden And How To Teach It

(Continued from Page 3)

In all this, his alliance with and significance for the present time can be effectively shown by reference to the ideas and work of Frank Lloyd Wright, the nearest modern counterpart of Thoreau. No one can doubt Wright's "progressiveness" in architecture. Here is a man who, more completely than Thoreau, accepts and approves the most modern techniques and materials, who create new forms appropriate to them, for whom industrial development is the natural growth of man, not to be feared, potentially more good than evil, yet who also, like Thoreau, insists that material advantages be used for the fulfillment of the **real** and the **whole** human life. The philosophy of Wright's autobiography offers many a striking reminiscence of **Walden.**

"Organic simplicity" is Wright's ideal for architectire — "to achieve simplicity and perfect realization of each thing as part of some organic way of this old yet new and deeper sense of reality" — to accept the beneficence of organic change. And it is his ideal for life:

"This new demand for life as organic — therefore as itself a noble kind of architecture — architecture is life — must read first lessons afresh in the great book of creation itself, despising all that lives either ashamed or afraid to live an honest life as itself, proud to live for what it is or may become of its own nature."

Thus to see Thoreau's principles guiding the work of one today who fully esteems the material aspects of modern civilization and looks constructively and realistically ahead and above, is to make apparent that Thoreau belongs to **us** rather than to the Indians.

David P. Edgell (Simmons College, Boston).

My special theme is the relation of the individual to society, as Thoreau sees it; a subject of great importance to our time.

Thoreau represents the continuance of a long line of native American radicalism, from Roger Williams, Anne Hutchinson, and all the other Antinomians of the Colonial Period, through Jonathan Edwards, and Thomas Jefferson, to Thomas Paine. Like Paine he drew a sharp distinction between society and government, looking upon government as a necessary evil. As Paine said, "Government, like dress, is the badge of lost innocence," From this it is only a step to Thoreau's dictum, in **Civil Disobedience,** that "That government is best which governs least."

Implied in Thoreau's suspicion of government in his belief in the necessity of a threefold loyalty: (a) To a higher law — that of one's own best nature; (b) to society; and, last and least, (c) to government. Of these three loyalties, the first is most important, and it validates his contention that government's unjust laws should be passively resisted.

His economic views may be summed up in the two injunctions, "Simplify, simplify," and "Become as independently self-reliant as possible."

If we ask, What is the teachability of these ideas, both social and economic, we must admit that they run counter to current practice and hence are difficult for the student to view sympathetically. What would happen to our vast and complex economic system if mass production of people's wants, instead of increasing, should suddenly and permanently diminish? The answer is, depression and chaos. We must conclude, therefore, that we have made our economic bed and, however much we might prefer Thoreau's, we have got to lie in our own.

His political theory rests on the assumption that there is a divine purpose in life and that the individual can help realize it by being true to his own best self. With the disappearance of God from most contemporary thinking and the substitution of a psychological view of man, this assumption becomes untenable. What can we put in the place of this divine sanction, to justify the assertion of the transcendent right of the individual? I cannot answer that. But we shall have to answer it if we are to teach Thoreau convincingly.

And, finally, how shall we answer the student's all too familiar and almost unanswerable question: But what if everybody behaved like Thoreau?

Well, we can say: Be assured that the vast majority of mankind will not ever behave like Thoreau. But we must also say that it is absolutely necessary that a few do behave in his way. These few are the saints and prophets of our civiliation: the Plato's, the St. Francis's, the Ghandi's, the Thoreau's. They provide (and I realize I'm begging my own question) the realometers — the final standards by which society is to be judged. Like the concept of Absolute Zero or the perfect yardstick, there they stand — unattainable, but forever the final basis of all measurement.

• • • •

The discussion which followed the three informal talks condensed above lasted nearly an hour. It is too bad that no record was kept of it, for it not only gave the speakers an opportunity to develop some of their points more fully but brought up a number of new topics.

R. M. Gay

Manual and Workbook in English
Mody C. Boatright
Dorothy R. Long

A practical combination of manual and workbook, this text comes in two editions, Form A and Form B. The clear, logical presentation of the grammatical principles is the same in both editions. The drill material differs in each, providing the teacher with an alternate set of exercises printed on detachable, easily graded sheets.

Form A 256 pages 1943 $1.4
Form B 257 pages 1946 $1.4
Henry Holt and Company
257 Fourth Avenue
New York

BEST for the Survey Course
"THE LITERATURE OF ENGLAND"
Third Edition
By Woods, Watt and Anderson
"THE LITERATURE OF THE UNITED STATES"
(In a new format)
By Blair, Hornberger & Stewart
Both in stock for second semester
SCOTT, FORESMAN & CO.

IN JANUARY
To the eleven already published, we add six more
CROFTS CLASSICS
Montaigne,
Selections from the Essays
D. M. Frame, ed.
Selections from Thomas Huxley
Alburey Castell, ed
Much Ado About Nothing
C. T. Prouty, ed.
Antony and Cleopatra
Theodore Spencer, ed.
Twelfth Night
Mark Eccles, ed.
Bacon, Essays
J. M .Patrick, ed.
96-128 pages 30c ea
Appleton-Century-Crofts, In
101 Fifth Ave. New Y